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A
Fifth LETTER,
Concerning the
Sacred Trinity;
IN
ANSWER
To what is Entitled,
The *Arians* Vindication of himself
against Dr *Wallis's* Fourth Letter
ON THE
TRINITY.

By JOHN WALLIS, D. D.

LONDON:
Printed for Tho. Parkhurst, at the Bible and Three
Crowns, in Cheapside, 1693.

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Sacred Trinity

ANSWER

To what's Published

The Answer's Vindication of
against Dr. Wallis's Fourth Letter

ON THE

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By JOHN WALLIS, D.D.

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Printed for Wm. Peckham, at the Bible and Tabor
Corner, in Cheap-side, 1682.

FIFTH LETTER

Concerning the Sacred Trinity.

SIR,

I Have met with an Answer to my *Fourth Lettek*. It is not Long, and my Reply shall be but short. There is very little in it concerning the Merits of the Cause, (save that he resolves to hold the Conclusion :) and as to Personal Reflections, or Disdainful Expressions, I do not think fit to trouble the Reader with a long Reply. For those, I think, do not hurt me so much, as him that useth them.

He is not pleased, pag. 1. that I said, *I had Argued Calmly*, without Scurrilous Language, or Reproachful Terms. And I appeal to the Reader,

whether it be not so. Nor doth he deny it. And if his Language were so too, he needed not to have made the Reader an Apology, to excuse his Expressions, that he might avoid the Character of a Common Railer, p. 1.

But, he says, *Abating the little Subtilties and Artifices, incomparably witty, there is not the least Grain of weight in my Letter.* Of this the Reader is to be Judge, both as to the Weight, and as to the Wit.

He says, *It seems, a Socinian wrote against me.* (True. And it seems he knew it: For he cites him.) *And that himself wrote as an Arian.* I think he should rather have said, He wrote, first as a Socinian (in his first Ten pages,) and then as an Arian, (in the other Ten.) For I do not find any thing, till toward the end of his Tenth page, whereby I could judge him other than a direct Socinian. And I think it will so appear to any other Reader.

He takes to himself the name of *Unitarian*; by which I do not find the *Arians* were wont to be called. But it is a new Name which the Socinians have taken up, to distinguish themselves, both from *Us*, and from the *Arians*. For the *Arians* are rather *Pluritarians*, as holding more Gods than One. And the Book to which him-
self

self refers us, p. 4. is intitled, *The History of the Unitarians, otherwise called Socinians.* And, in p. 11. where he first mentions the *Arians*, he doth introduce it with a Preface, minding me, that I write against *Arians* as well as *Socinians*: As having, till then, spoke for the *Socinians* only, not for the *Arians*. And even in his tenth page, (toward the beginning of it) what had been said of the *Socinians* by name, and of *Socinus* in particular, he takes to himself, as if one of that Party. He seems (saith he of me) to insinuate an aspersion on *U.S.*, that *WE* believe not *Angels*.

He tells us now, p. 3. He doth believe them; and I will suppose also, that he doth believe the *Soul's Immortality*. But, when he there says, that I bring a *World of Arguments* to prove the *Immortality of the Soul*; he mistakes again. For those Arguments were brought against *Socinus*, not to prove the *Soul's Immortality*; but, that the *Soul*, in its separate condition, was capable of *Pain* or *Pleasure*: which *Socinus* denied.

For requital to this, he tells me, he had a good mind to prove the *Existence of a Deity*, for that he had heard of some men of the *Profession of the Church of England*, that have almost been *Atheists* at the heart. And truly if he should do so, I should not think it much amiss: For I have heard, the same suspected of some *Socinians*. He

He now tells me, *p. 21.* He never was a Socinian in his Life. Of what he had been in the former part of his Life, I had said nothing. (For I knew no more what it was, than who he is.) But (*p. 37.*) of what he was in the beginning of his Discourse. And 'tis plain he there writes like a direct Socinian (as was shewed but now,) though as an *Arrian* some time after. *united on his own*
 He tells me (*p. 21.*) that he is neither the Socinian, nor his Friend, who assisted in his first Book. Neither did I say that he is; but that he might be for ought I knew. But whether he be or not, 'tis the same thing to me, for I am yet to fight in the dark with I know not whom.

He says, He is not concerned to defend Socinus, or any man who hath dropt independent words. Nor did I require it of him. And, whether he were, or were not the same man who wrote before; yet, since here he acts another Person, I left it free for him (*p. 19. 20.*) to declare, if he pleased, what was said before; to grant what was there denied; or deny what was there granted. *and on his own*

But then, he thinks, *p. 1.* I should not charge him with writing Contradictions; because such things may possibly be found in the others Answer. Nor do I. (This is only a piece of his wonted Artifice of Misrepresenting me.) I tell him indeed, it is hard to
 please

please them both, when they do not agree a-
 mongst themselves: And I did observe, (and
 argue from it) what he grants, though the other
 had denied it. But I never charge him with
 what the other had said. And (if he look it
 over again) he will find, that I did not con-
 front him (to shew thence a contradiction) with
 what the other had said: But did confront
 what himself had said in his ten first pages, with
 what he says in the other ten. And 'tis mani-
 fest, that in the first ten, he acts the Socinian;
 and in the latter ten, the Arian. But, in whe-
 ther of the twain he acts his own part, it was
 not easie to determine: till he now tells us, he
 is an Unitarian. (see the words in the margin)
 He had argued, *post, 14.* That the Trinity are
 Persons, *as really, and as properly, and fully per-*
sonally distinct, as Three Angels. And each Person *(be-
 son and Holy Ghost by name)* *complete and distinct in*
himself, with a complete Personal distinction as three
several Angels. From whence, when I inferred
 his owning the Personality of the Holy Ghost. He
 feelings, in *himself*, the *God*, *that* *is* *himself*,
 none tell us, *post, 14.* *as much* *as* *becomes* *an* *Angel.*
 But if he own him to be as much a Person, as a
 Man, or Angel is a Person: it is almost, if per-
 haps more, *obvious* *and* *manifest* *for* *in* *this*
 point.

(6.)

that charged him also with misreciting me
in many other things. As when I am intro-
duced (very often) as saying of Two Gods, Three
Gods, Person Gods, withholding ever at the first to our
one God, and the like; according as here also,
he says, p. 7. that I say, in your self, own Two
Gods, (and why may not I then Three &c) when he
knows very well, this is not my Language;
nor is anything of all this said by me. For this
he now says, p. 5. 'Tis true enough he doth say
but that he doth it by inference. But he should
then speak it as his Inference, nor use it as his
words. And now in this answer he doth
I might have taken notice (amongst a great
many gross mistakes,) that where I had men-
tioned the Lords and Commons of England, de-
claring the Prince of Orange, to be King of England,
France and Ireland, he hath recited it, First King
of England, Scotland, (and France) as if the Parlia-
ment of England had taken upon them to dis-
pose of the Kingdom of Scotland, and not that
of Ireland. But of this, and many more, I passed
over, without reflecting on it. Because in his
Language, he is so very indeligent and careless,
(and otherwise obnoxious) that it were childish
to reflect on all. But I was obliged to take notice (because it
quies

quite) alters my Argument) If what he says, p. 4.
 that I say, *Three sides make one Cube, &c.* which is
 neither true, nor are they my words. I argued
 not from *three sides*, but from the *three Dimensions*
 of a Cube. This he calls *Trifling*; and would
 persuade us that *side* and *dimension*, differ no more
 than *Moving* and *quarry* his other word, which is
 fitter for his mouth than mine. But though he
 perhaps know no difference between them,
 yet he should not have cited it as *my words*. (and
 say, that I say so, when I did not.) For I ought
 to know better; and that a Cube hath *six sides*,
 though but *Three Dimensions*. Nor did I argue
 from the *six sides*, but from the *Three Dimensions*.
 Yet I can forgive him this (rather than when he
 doth it willfully) though it mis-represents my Argu-
 ment: Because I believe it to be out of *pru-
 dence*, not of *Malice*.

He doth not like, p. 6. either *This*, or any
 other *Smile's*; and would have me no more in-
 sist upon them. (But he must excuse me from fol-
 lowing his advice herein, unless he understood it
 better, than by what was now said, he seems
 to do.) Because, if he be not mistaken (as I think
 he is) they are very far from my purpose. That is
 He thinks, they do not prove the *Trinity*. True:
 These, alone, do not prove it (not was it in-

ended they should) But they prove (what they were brought to prove) that it is not a Contradiction, or Inconsistent with Reason, that there may be three persons (which we call Persons) that are but one God. And thus much he had before granted, and doth now again confirm it, p. 3, 4. The true indeed (he says) I cannot say that there is a Contradiction in holding that there may be three Persons in God. For, saith he, There is none sort of Contradictions; The one Express, the other Implied. I cannot say, there is a Contradiction in holding it. Because I have not the Definition of the word Contradiction, as to esse or implied contradiction. And, for an express contradiction, I do not pretend to it. If therefore there be no Contradiction, either Express, or Implied. It is what I was to prove.

But, saith he, The dispute shall not end here. He will be allowed the Privilege (and no body doth deny it him,) to swear in the First Commandment, to asseverate the word God. With all my heart, I was never against it. (For what he says, more than once, p. 3, 4. that I meanly cry, be silent to Scripture, is but another piece of his wonted Art of misrepresenting.) There is nothing to that purpose (in any thing of mine.) I do sometime blame him for changing (the state of the Question: As, when he would have me prove by Reason, that it is so: I

tell

tell him, That is not the Question, (nor is that to be proved by Reason :) The Question is, whether there is any thing in Reason, why it cannot be so. Now, let him keep to the Question; and then, if he think he can prove, from Scripture, that it is Inconsistent with Reason, for Three somewhat to be One God; or, that it is a Contradiction, for God the Creator, and God the Redeemer, and God the Sanctifier, to be the same God; or, that it is impossible for the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, to be One and the same God. Let him try his skill. And, let him make what use he can of the First Commandment, to Define the word God, so as to prove this a Contradiction. But, when he had claimed this Privilege, (and no body doth deny it) He makes no use of it for any such Definition.

The truth is, I had already granted him, from that Commandment, (p. 21, 24, 25, 28, 29) more than he was willing I should grant. That is, **me to have NO OTHER GOD** (Great or Little, Equal or Unequal,) but the Lord God of Israel.

Yes, says he; There is one Supreme God, and then Creature-God; But that this is not to have Two Person-Gods. How so? If these be Two Gods, and each of them a Person, (complete and entire of

himself; was really, and properly, and fully, and personally distinct, as a Man or Angel, as he had before told us at (p. 8. n. 4.) they must needs be Two Persons Gods. But we, according to the First Commandment, acknowledge but One God; and those three somewhat (whom in a metaphorical sense we call Persons) not so to be distinct as to become Three Gods. He hopes however to avoid the First Commandment, by saying that, though they be Two Gods, they are not two Gods Co-equal; and that they worship the Son, not with supreme Worship; with Mediation, not Adoration; &c. What he means by his two Worships, of Mediation, and Adoration, I do not well understand; unless they be his Names for Faith and Charity. Nor do I remember, that I have before heard of a worship of Mediation. That Christ is our Mediator, I know; but did not know that he is our Worshipping: nor what he thinks of the *Isidore*, whom they worshipped the *Golden Calf*? Surely, they did not think (this *Calf* to be Co-equal with the Supreme God. Nor did they think it to be (*Deus natus*) a God by Nature; but (*Deus factus*) a made God as (for themselves) had made it, just before. Yet I never knew, that this did excuse them from Idolatry. He

He doth not own Christ to be the True God, (for such there is but One, the only true God,) nor yet a false God; but a Mean between both, p. 6. Now 'tis true, the Heathen had (their Deos medioximos) their Middling Gods: But I never knew that we could worship such, without Idolatry. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God (the Supreme God) and him only. If thou shalt thou serve, was our Saviour's Doctrine, Mat. 4. 10. And St. John expressly calls him the True God, 1 John 5. 20. (Not a Middling God, between True and False) and therefore the same God with the Father, the Only true God. I been told, that he said, &c.

To this Character of Christ, Rev. 1. 8. I. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, (the First and the Last) saith the Lord, which is, and was, and is to come, The Almighty. He says, This title given him in opposition to Gods simpler one, I A M. But he should have observed, that the same title is, 1st Joh. 4. (given to God, in) Commendation to Christ, 1st Joh. 5. 20. &c. And if there were a Character of the Supreme God, it is so here. And if he think the simpler term, I A M, to be more expressive of the Supreme God; we have that also Emphatically given to Christ, Rom. 9. 5. &c. which

which I S, or the Being, over all; the Supreme Being.

To what further I had brought, p. 30, 31, 32, 33. to prove him to be the Supreme God, the same God with the Father, (not a Middling, or Titular God,) he makes no Reply: which therefore stands as it was; nor need I repeat it, because it may be read there. And it is so full and clear, that I need add no more to it.

To what I had said of Job. 17. 3. To know Thee (not Thee Only, or Only Thee,) the Only True God. He saith, He hath Answered already. And I have already Replied; nor need I repeat it. Their Argument from thence is just in this form: The God of Abraham is the only true God; therefore, not the God of Isaac, or the God of Jacob. Yes, say I, the God of Isaac, and the God of Israel, is the same God; but under another consideration. So here; God the Creator (or God the Father) is the Only true God; therefore not God the Redeemer, nor God the Sanctifier. Yes; God the Redeemer, and God the Sanctifier, is the same God, the only true God. In like manner, Jer. 16. 14, 15. It shall no more be said, The Lord hath brought up the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the Children of Israel out of the North

North Country. Now, saith the First Commandment, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt; Thou shalt have No Other God but Me: Therefore not the God which brought them out of the North Country. Yes, say I, even this God also. Which is not another God; but the same God; though considered as the Author of another Benefit.

There be many other things both in his first and second Paper (his Answer and his Vindication) which is very open to be Rejection, if it were worth the while. But I think you have said enough already; and, he thinks, too much, (that I have been too stiff, too hard with him, p. 8.) which things I shall therefore bring to the very self and the Reader, the labourer must add to

But three things he calls me to account for omitting; His Reproof of my false Idea of the Personality of God; the Impossibility and Blasphemy of his Incarnation; and of a Death of God, p. 8. Now when I had proved the things to be True; I thought that had been a sufficient Answer to his calling them False, Impossible, and Blasphemous. For they are never the more so; for his calling them so. And I know not what further Answer he should expect; unless he would have me say, 'Tis foul-mouthed Blasphemy in him, to call

call it *Blasphemy*. But if I should answer him all along at this rate, according as his language deserves; we should, instead of Disputing, fall to right down *Railing*; which is the Character he was afraid of, pag. 10.

However (to gratify him once more,) That by the Word, *Joh. 1.* is meant, *Christ*, himself owns; and, That *this Word was God from the beginning*; That *he made the World, and all things*; and that *without him was not any thing made which was made*; and therefore, say I, *Himself was not made*; unless our Lord would have us think, *He made Himself*; That this *God*, is the *Supreme God*; we have proved at large, (if he deny it to be proved) we must leave it to the Reader to judge of the Arguments; and *this Word was made Flesh* (I hope I need not tell him, that to be made *Flesh*, and to be *Incaruate*, is all one; for every one understands this who know that *Caro carnis* in Latin for *Flesh*.) Therefore this is no *Blasphemy*.

Again; That *God in Christ suffered and died*; and that we are *Redeemed by the Blood of God*, he had before told us, ch. 13. v. 14. That this is the *True God*, we have proved at large (as was but now said.) Therefore the *Death of God* (that is, of him that was *God* as well as *Man*.) is no *Blasphemy*. Yet

Yet again; I do not take his *Reproof* (as he calls it) to be a *Proof*, that my *Idea of Personality* is *False*. And therefore I did not think it deserved an *Answer*; having proved the thing before. Yet I thought I had *Answered* it (as much as it need to be answered) when (at my pag. 26.) I told him (nor doth he deny it) that he seemed well pleased at his p. 20. that I owned the word *Person* to be but *Metaphorical*; though at his p. 7. (which is the *Reproof* he means) he did not like it. For till after pag. 7. he acted the *Socinian*, and did not come to act the *Arian*, till afterward; and then he seemed, at p. 20. to like it well enough. I shall yet add somewhat more upon that point, which if it may not satisfy him, (who seems to intimate p. 8. that he will not be satisfied,) may give some further satisfaction to the Reader.

The word *Person* (*persona*) is originally a Latin word, and does not properly signify a *Man* (so as that another *person* must needs imply another *Man*;) for then the word *Films* would have served, and they needed not have taken in the word *Persona*: But rather, one so *Circumstanced*. And the same *Man*, if considered in other *Circumstances* (considerably different,) is reputed another *Person*. And that this is the true

notion of the word *Person*, appears by those noted Phrases, *personam induere, personam deponere, personam agere, personam sustinere, sustineo unus tres personas*, and many the like in approved Latin Authors. Thus the same Man may at once sustain the *Person* of a *King* and of a *Father*; if he be invested both with Regal and Paternal Authority. Now because the *King*, and the *Father*, are for the most part not only different *Persons* but different *Men* also (and the like in other cases) hence it comes to pass, that another *Person* is sometimes supposed to imply another *Man*: but not always, nor is that the proper sense of the word. It is Englished in our Dictionaries, by the *state, quality, or condition*, whereby one *Man* differs from another: and so, as the *Condition* alters, the *Person* alters, though the *Man* be the same. Our School-men of later Ages, do sometimes apply the word *Persona* to *Angels* as well as *Men*; but even that is but *Metaphorical*; nor do I find that it ever was so used, in approved Latin Authors, either for *Angels, Genii*, or their Heav'nly Gods; but for the different *state or condition* of *Men* only.

Now when the same *Man* doth thus sustain two *Persons*, as that of a *King*, and that of a *Father*; he may as to one thing act as a *King*,
by

by his *Regal Authority*; as to another thing as a *Father*, by his *Paternal Authority*. And these *Authorities*, may be in *subordination* one to the other, though the *Man* be the same. And what is done in either capacity, may indifferently be said to be done by the *Man*, or by the *King*: (as that *David*, or the *King*, pardoned *Absalom*;) and in like manner, by the *Man*, or by the *Father*.

This being the true and proper notion of the word *Person*, we are next to consider what it is to signify in the present case. Where we are to consider, that the word *Person* is not applied in Scripture to these three so called: It is not there said, *These three Persons are one*, but only *These three are one*. 'Tis but the Church's usage that gives to these three *somewhats*, the name of *Persons*.

And therefore our *Arian* was much mistaken, when he tells us, p. 20. that the word *Person* is the *Hinge of the Controversy*. The *Hinge of the Controversy*, is that notion concerning these three *somewhats*, which the *Fathers* (who first used it) did intend to design by the name *Person*. So that we are not from the word *Person* to determine what was that *Notion*; but, from that *Notion* which they would express, to determine

in what sense the word *Person* is here used; And if the word *Person* do not well fit that sense; all that can be thence inferred, is no more, but that they have made use of an *Unfit Name* to express their Notion. It is no more but as if a *Cruel Pope* take the name of *Clement*; or a wicked one the name of *Pius*; or if a *Man* be named *Willson*, whose Father's name was *Thomas*. And in all such cases, *certitudo Rei tollit errorem Nominis*. And if we know who is the *Man* designed by such a *Name*, 'tis a *Ridiculous exception*, to say, *This is not the Man*, because that *Name* doth well agree with his *Nature*.

Now Two of these Three being represented in Scripture, as *Father* and *Son*; and this *Father* said to *Beget* the *Son*, and all these in a sense *metaphorical*; (not in such sense as those words do properly signify amongst Men;) they thought it not unfit (in continuation of the same Metaphor) to call them *Persons*. Because as the word *Person* doth properly agree to the relations of *Father* and *Son* in a proper sense; so doth the word *Person* in a *metaphorical* sense, to the *Father* and *Son* so taken *metaphorically*; and the word *Beget*, by a like Metaphor.

When therefore it is certain, that the Notion which the Ancient Fathers had concerning these

Three, which in a metaphorical sense they called *Person*, was this, That there is a *Distinction* between them, greater than that of the *Divine Attributes*, but not so great as to make them *Three Gods*: it is manifest that they took the Metaphor, not from that abusive sense of the word *Person*, when (amongst us) it is put for *Man*; but from that proper sense of the word *Persona*, wherein it signifies the *State*, *Condition*, *Office*, or *Relation* of a *Man*, as variously circumstanced with reference to others; whereof the same *Man* may sustain more than *One*. As when *David*, was the *Son of Jesse*, the *Father of Solomon*, and the *King of Israel*. So if we say of any, that he is a *Person of Honour*, a *Person of Worth*, and a *Person of Interest*: That same *Man* may be all this, without becoming *Three Men*.

Now this our *Arian* may call this (if he please) a *Quirk*, a *Criticism*, an undermining the very *Idea* of the word *Person*, as he did in his, p. 7, 15, 17. (or may neglect it, if he pleases:) But the sober Reader (who understands it better) will have better thoughts of it.

And therefore I shall not take his advice, p. 7, 8. to say that *God* is the name of an *Office*, that so he might know how to attack me; (as he says,) which while I talk so *variously*, he knows
not

not how to do. I say, *God* is the name of the *Nature*; but if he will have *Christ* to be the name of an *Office* (the *Mediatory Office*;) and the *Comforter*, or even the *Creator*, the *Redeemer*, the *Sanctifier*, to be names of *Work or Office*, it will not be much amiss.

Now, when I had said this *Doctrine* of ours is as old at least as the *New Testament*; (because I can prove it from thence;) he will have it (p. 5.) no older than the disputes of *Alexander and Athanasius*; which the *Primitive Church* knew nothing of. But he barrs *Quotations* all along. And therefore I must not prove it (to be known to the *Church* before that time,) but leave it to the *Judgment* of *Readers* versed in *Church History*, whose word must pass in this case; his or mine.

To his *Question*, p. 6. *Did the Jews ever hear of it before Christianity?* I think they had some *Intimations* of it, as they had of the *Resurrection*: But not so clearly (either of them) as to be generally understood of all; nor so fully as in the *New Testament*. And I think it was from those notices of it amongst the *Jews*, that not only *Plato* derived much of his *Philosophy*, but other *Heathens* also much of their *Mythology*; though they did much disguise, and sometimes

Ridicule

Ridicule the notices they had thence, as our *Arian* now doth that of the Trinity. But this is not the business now before us.

Toward the close, he is so kind as not to desire *Arianism* to be imposed on others, any more than *Trinitarianism* on him, p. 8. But neither is this business before us; who are but *Disputants*, not *Law-makers*.

But so constant he means to be to his cause, that he will be content to be persuaded out of his Name with his Opinion. (I think there is reason why he should change his Opinion; but as to the changing of his Name, he may use his discretion.) But having said much (that he might not be thought to desert it) he thinks it advisable to drop the cause. Which he may, if he please, and leave it to the Reader to judge of what is said.

I conclude as he doth; It is impossible but offences will come; but wo unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a Millstone, &c.

Febr. 14.
1692.

Yours, &c.

J. Wallis.

Advertisement.

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J. Wallis.

